WE ARE PURPOSE DRIVEN

Comstock Communicator

A monthly publication September 2010

Special points of interest:

- Are you Ready for the big day?
- What is our church's "language?"
- Change for the sake of change. . .
- New schedules for Sunday School
- Birthdays & Anniversaries
- Visit the library today
- Calendar

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BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY - SEPTEMBER 12, 2010

ARE YOU READY FOR THE BIG DAY? What is the BIG DAY everyone is talking about? It is the Kick-off to the 2010-2011 Education programs at our church. Many of the Ministry Team are working together to make this a great event to start off the season.

Here is the schedule for the day

9:30 - We will gather to worship with Pastor Bert VanAntwerp leading our service. Our worship team has put together an exciting service. Pastor Ben and Kelly will be praying for us as they will be flying over the Atlantic as we meet. We will miss you, but as they say "The show must go on."

10:45-12:00 - The First Impressions team will have a video or something to fill the time for any visitors or anyone who will want to stay at church.

12:00 - There will be a picnic on the front lawn, if the weather permits. If it is raining we will move everything inside. All the food will be provided by the Fellowship Team. Just come and enjoy the food and fellowship. Bring lawn chairs, if you would like, for the time of worship.

1:00 - 2:15 - The Education Team will have games and fun things to do for everyone. Can't have games without prizes. You will want to join in!!!

2:30 - The Worship Team will be leading our "evening" praise and worship time and Pastor Bert will be involved once again. Our day will conclude about 3:15. These times are what we are shooting for, they may vary a little.

If anyone has any questions you can talk to anyone on the Fellowship Team. We have been planning the event for a few months now with the help of other Ministry teams.

Come prepared to enjoy a great day with friends and family, but don't forget to ask your friends, especially those who are looking for a church home.

Come prepared to be touched by the Holy Spirit. He will be present so come with an open heart.

Now ARE YOU READY FOR THE BIG DAY? It all begins on September 12 at 9:30 AM.

What Impression Do We Leave?

Our First Impression Team started out looking at ways to make a guest feel more comfortable while visiting our church. Valet parking, greeters at the door, and a manned welcomed center all serve to make a good impression when you walk in the door. But what does this massive structure we call a church have to say for its self? If you were to wander through this, or any other, church building, what conclusions would you reach about that church?

I do this many times throughout the summer as I deliver wedding flowers to various churches. I often arrive before anyone else and I'm always eager to absorb the language of the church.

One church I visited was calling the children. It had a safe, fenced in play ground on the side of the building. The youth room, next to the new gymnasium, was well stocked with games for the kids. Outside there was a sand volleyball court and a baseball field. Judging from the size of the sanctuary, this was not a large congregation, but I could tell the youth were a priority.

Another church sang to me in joyful colors. There was art work in the entryway. Banners hung high in praise and response cards hung along the wall in the sanctuary where people had written down their personal faith stories or a response to the sermon. A colorful quilt of story blocks had been made using the sermon theme. I was engaged with this church even though I hadn't heard a sermon there.

The language of the next church was like a buzz of a busy bee. I had arrived on a Saturday afternoon. The wedding I was involved with was just one of many activities happening there. A community food pantry was being made available. An attractive welcome center greeted me. A coffee station and café tables beckoned further down hall. Posters hung on the wall telling of church and community events. A group of actors in costume walked by as their rehearsal let out. This church spoke of its active life in the community even though not one word had been said.

The church I was at yesterday whispered to me in somber contrast, however. It was like stepping into my Grandmother's living room. Everything was pristine. The stained glass in the sanctuary was spectacular, but I didn't see one poster or piece of literature about what was happening in the spiritual life of this congregation. If cleanliness were next to godliness, they'd be first in line.

I love visiting other churches. In my excitement to explore other churches, I have been known to exclaim, "Oh I want to go here! Look at what they are doing. Look at the programs or Bible studies. Look at this art work, isn't that cool? See how active they are in the community, and in each other's lives?"

I would like to think that a visitor who walks in our front door will have no question what we are about, as the language of our church is clearly stated above the welcome center for all to see, "We are called to LOVE GOD wholeheartedly and to LOVE OTHERS by leading them to commitment and maturity in Jesus Christ."

Stating what we are about in writing is fine and serves those who enter our doors. But what about the people in the neighborhood who may never step foot inside to read our mission? As they drive by and view our building, what impression are we leaving with them? Have the words of our mission been spoken loudly and clearly enough in the community, through our actions, to resonate through all that brick that serves to contain us? Do you have to step into our building to know who we are? I hope not.

THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR BEN

"Change for the sake of change is something to be feared and avoided. But fear of change, because it is not in the traditions of our fathers, because it is not according to custom, is also to be feared. Many of the sons of our church faced the challenge of changing times with courage and determination to promote changes which would harmonize our worship of God to the ever changing patterns of life."

Perhaps those words above are familiar to some. I'm sure that some have read them at one time or another. I know that because they are some of the opening words that Thomas Boven wrote in this church's 50th Anniversary Commemoration booklet. I saw many of your faces, at least those who were around almost fifty years ago. That booklet was published in 1963, almost fifty years ago. If you're quick with your math, what that means is soon, in 2013, we will have the joy of celebrating our 100 year anniversary. That's a long time. Many churches do not make it to a 100 year anniversary. Only three CRC churches in the Kalamazoo area are older than us. To get to 100 years means that a certain undercurrent has been present, that of looking forward. In that same booklet, then pastor Rev. Herman Minnema wrote this.

"The celebration of our 50th anniversary calls attention to the past. And indeed we may use this occasion to count the many blessings we have received from God. However, we must not live in the past. When a person or institution lives in the past rather than the present, it ceases to be efficient in the world and neglects its divinely given task.

Attempts to turn back the clock always result tragically. It is easy for us to get stuck fast in our own yesterdays. What we did yesterday we are likely to do tomorrow. Consequently there is a never ceasing danger of our believing that the past represents the ideal. The Apostle Paul would not advocate the utter discarding of the past. This can never be done. But an idolatry of the past, a bondage to the customs and practices of the vanished decades makes a church ineffective in the present day."

These are powerful and true words, and they summarize a characteristic of a church community that will last for a 100 years and beyond. As I have been here for almost a year and a half, I still see this characteristic present in this church. I was recently reflecting on what took place this past year with our visioning process. We've evaluated things, dreamed about possibilities, and started to take action. I see teams reenergized around their vision. I see new people having joined teams. I see new ideas being presented and tried. I see a church thinking through what is necessary to not merely celebrate 100 years, but 150 years. If we only wanted to reach 100 years, we could easily coast. It's only two years away. But to reach 150 years, that will take vision, determination, creativity, commitment, and a true desire to grow in our relationships with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The past year and a half has brought changes: new pastor, new welcome center, new team members, new worship director, women in office, and others could be listed. They are changes that come not out of a desire to simply change for change sake, but as Thomas Boven wrote almost 50 years ago, "to promote changes which would harmonize our worship of God to the ever changing patterns of life." And as we talked about in the beginning of the summer, God is showing us signs of life here. We have seen new members join, new visitors come, former members return, continued growth in community involvement, and many more. We have much to praise God for as we begin this new ministry year.

As we praise him for what he has done and celebrate these past joys, we also look forward to what he has next for us. We do so with courage, determination, commitment, and humility that we and those who come after us may give glory to God for another 50 years. In Christ, Pastor Ben

Layette News Report

Thank you to all for your support.

There was little activity in January, February and March. Layettes were delivered at that time to the Gospel Mission and Alternative pregnancy center. We delivered 11 layettes in April through August.

Here is a list of items that go into the layette:

Large Blankets	Receiving Blankets	Bunting (winter)
Bibs	Booties or socks	bottles (1 lg, 1 sm)
Crib sheets	dressy outfits	diapers
Hats	lotion, powder, soap	Onesies
Pacifiers	sleepers	sweaters
Towel & wash cloth	toys	wipes
Today devotional	Bible	Church card

We are running short on pacifiers, wipes, baby oil, white onesies, fancy onesies and towels.

Thanks to all who have and will be giving to the layettes. Special thanks to John Schaap for the Gideon Bibles and Jim Bosch for the boxes. Many giving's make light work for everyone.

Thanks to All,
The Layette Committee

Pastor Ben's Items of Note

Praises and Upcoming Events

1. YPS Leadership – We praise God that a leadership team has formed to guide our high school youth group. The team includes, Pastor Ben, Rachel Slager, Mike Lee, Jim and Lisa Bosch, and Ronda Slager. The team is currently planning for a great year and is excited to get started. Please pray that the year starts off well and that we grow as a group in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2. Prayer Services – One new goal of the Worship Team is to have a greater focus on prayer in our worship ministry. To accomplish this, the worship team and the elders have planned to hold six prayer-focused services throughout the year in the evenings. Our first prayer-focused service will take place on September 19 at 5 pm. These will be held in the Fellowship Hall and will include singing, a meditation, and different types of prayer. Sometimes prayers will be led by individuals. Sometimes we'll pray as groups. Sometimes we'll have times of silent prayer. The services will also have different themes that will guide our prayers. Please consider joining us so that as a church we might all grow in prayer together.

Sunday School Notes of Interest

SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTS SEPTEMBER 12, 2010!

NEW TIMES!

NEW SCHEDULE!

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM - SNACK IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

11:00 AM – 11:45 AM – CLASS TIME

11:45 AM – 12:00 PM – SINGING IN THE SANTUARY

GRADES K-1 – RACHEL SLAGER

GRADES 2-3 – JULIE SMIT

GRADES 4-5 – KAREN TIESMAN

GRADES 6-8 – MARK & KIM TERPSTRA

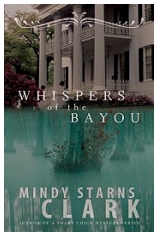
HIGH SCHOOL – JOANNE SMIT

KEEP DECEMBER 12, 2O1O @ 5:00PM
FOR OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM!

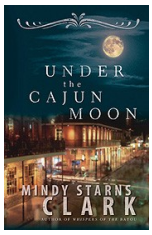
JIM BOSCH – SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

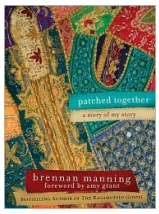
SEE WHAT'S NEW IN THE LIBRARY!

BOOKS:



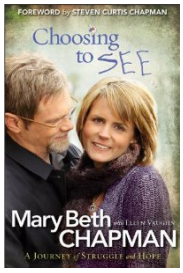
Whispers of the Bayou and **Under the Cajun Moon** *by Mindy Starns Clark* – These suspense thrillers are set in Louisiana Bayou country and New Orleans, and while each is a stand-alone story with different characters, they are both full of mystery, past secrets, hidden dangers, and the glow of God's unending grace.





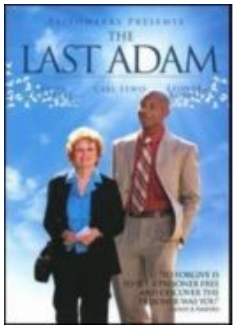
Patched Together *by Brennan Manning* – This is at first glance a charming tale of Willie Juan, a lonely, rejected boy who finds belonging in the eyes of the mysterious Man of Sorrows through three distinct seasons of his life: morning, noon and night. It is also a memorable story in which we, the readers, can see ourselves as we come to understand that, in the end, only Abba's love remains.

Choosing to See – A Journey of Struggle and Hope *by Mary Beth Chapman* – All she wanted was a calm, peaceful life of stability and control. What she got was a husband who later became a famous award-winning singer/songwriter, a houseful of six creatively rambunctious children, and a tragedy with pain she never imagined possible. The wife of Steven Curtis Chapman shares her unexpected journey and her heart, and shows us that even in the hardest of times, there is hope if we CHOOSE TO SEE IT.



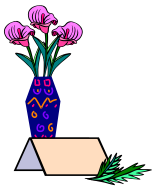
DVDs;

"Hachi – A Dog's Tale" – Based on a true story, this film depicts the unbreakable bond of friendship and loyalty between a dog and his "man", and will truly touch your heart.



"The Last Adam" – An exceptional story of the power of forgiveness. If you liked "The Blind Side", this is the movie for you.

1 Jaime VanderLugt
6 Jim Bosch
7 Evelyn Kemp
8 Helen Burkhead
Anne Joling
9 Pearl Doorn
10 Pete DenHartigh
11 Bernadene Dykstra
23 Joel Amos
26 Mark Terpstra
Grace Triemstra
29 Ross DeBruyn
Mike Harris
Tyler Tiesman



Happy Anniversary

4/48 Rein & Lena VanOosterum
6/63 Paul & Evelyn Kemp
20/57 Herm & Darlene Cramer
27/68 Tom & Ann Triemstra
28/84 Jim & Tina Slager

The Communicator is published by and for the members and friends of Comstock CRC.

Editor: Lisa Bosch
Library: Thea McNeilage

The October issue will come out on October 3. All articles should by submitted by September 28.

September Schedules

NURSERY

	AM	PM
9/5	Leah Brower & Megan Nowak	Val Denton
9/12	Dwain & Becky Cramer Family	Julie Smit
9/19	Karen Smit & Katelynn DeBruyn	Chris Selles
9/26	Don & Barb VanderLugt Family	Allison Bosch

OFFERINGS

	AM	PM
9/5	Comstock Ministries/Chr. Ed.	Missions
9/12	Comstock Ministries/Chr. Ed.	Calvin College
9/19	Comstock Ministries/Chr. Ed.	Calvin Seminary
9/26	Comstock Ministries/Chr. Ed.	Bible League International

ACCOMPANISTS

	PM
9/5	Joy Koning
9/19	Barb Hassing
9/26	Linda French

LIBRARIANS

9/5 & 12 Thea McNeilage
9/19 & 26 Grace Slager

WELCOME CENTER

9/5 Jan Larkin
9/12 Tom & Ann Triemstra
9/19 Bob & Meredith Gano
9/26 Greg & Sueann Nowak

GREETERS

AM - Pete DenHartigh & MaryLee Gosnell
PM - Rod & Henrietta Linders

COFFEE SERVER

MaryLee Gosnell

USHERS

AM - Eric Selles & Tyler Triemstra
PM - Matt Terpstra

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP

9/5 Cindy Amos & Katie Lee
9/12 Jan Larkin & Abigail Triemstra
9/19 Jan Larkin & Molly Selles
9/26 Kelly Hulst & Allison Bosch

SONG SERVICE LEADERS

9/5 Pete DenHartigh
9/19 Kelli Terpstra
9/26 Scott Brower

TECH TEAM

9/5 & 26 Scott & Seth Brower
9/12 Jim & Tina Slager
9/19 Mark & Matt Terpstra

September 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Labor Day	7	8 9:30 Layette Team	9	10	11 Cornhole Tournament at Comstock Community Center
12 Back to Church Sunday	13	14 7:00 Council	15	16	17	18 YPS Kickoff weekend
19 6:15-8:30 YPS meets	20	21	22 8:30 Fellowship Breakfast	23 6:00 YPS leaders meeting	24	25
26 6:15 YPS parent meeting	27	28 7:00 Elders & Deacons	29	30		